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As I have just said, the first quatrain of the sonnet to Elizabeth Percy is really charming:

Down in a northern vale wild flowrets grew,  
And lent new sweetness to the summer gale;  
The Muse there found them all remote from view,  
Obscur'd with weeds, and scattered o'er the dale.

Were the whole poem of equal quality, Percy would be a more important sonneteer, but to have written always so, he must have been a poet as well as an antiquarian, and he must have looked with less condescension on the beauties of old poetry. The truth is, of course, that he had no originality of any sort; he was only a sensitive barometer of the literary tendencies of his time. By happy accident and the insistence of friends he gave a tremendous impetus to romantic poetry, but he was incapable of responding creatively to the poetic inspiration he helped to bring to others.

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#### A CORRECTION

My article on "The Authorship of *MacFlecknoe*," in *Mod. Lang. Notes*, xxxiii, 449, misstates the number of lines in the *Satyrs upon the Jesuits*. The error does not invalidate the argument, but I take occasion here to correct it. The number of lines in the *Satyrs upon the Jesuits*, exclusive of the Prologue, is 1650, not 1034; and the total number of lines in Oldham exclusive of the Pindarics is 7251, not 6635. Accordingly, '12' in the last line of the text on p. 455 should be '7,' and in Note 8 '34' should be '37' and '18' should be '28.' In Note 4, also, '1100' should be '1716.' The rest of the note, however, holds after this correction, as does the argument as a whole.

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#### BRIEF MENTION

*Edward Young's Conjectures on Original Composition*. Edited by Edith J. Morley (Modern Language Texts: English Series; General Editor, W. P. Ker. Manchester, At the University Press; London and New York, Longmans, Green & Co., 1918). The purpose of an incidental reference in this periodical (*MLN*, xxxii, 189) was to minimize the tendency to neglect this essay in discussions of essential principles of literary style and authorship. It was not known then (March, 1917) that another edition of the *Conjectures* was so soon to follow Professor Brandl's of 1903 (*Jahrbuch der deut. Shakespeare-Gesellschaft*, xxxix); but Dr. Steinke's edition (1917) was already in the press, and as promptly

as possible after its appearance it was welcomed in *MLN* (xxxiii, 444 ff.). After a brief interval it was announced that an edition of the *Conjectures* was in preparation at the University of Manchester, and this was promptly published in the year 1918. The Manchester edition is in the form of a small, handy, well-made book, moderate in price (\$1.35), and by its place on the list of easily procured texts has gained an obvious advantage over the two preceding editions. Dr. Steinke made a plea for the usefulness of his edition on the ground that Professor Brandl's edition "is too much out of sight and out of reach of the average student and the general reader"; but the *Americana Germanica* is also not a series that goes far to supply a general need. It is a series that does not, it would seem, always find prompt recognition even in scholarly circles, for Dr. Steinke's monograph did not arrive at the University of Manchester—if indeed it be destined to arrive there—in time to become known to Miss Morley. Of course, this may be due to unusual conditions of international exchange. The brief interval between the two editions is also to be considered. Tho adopting a different plan, Miss Morley has not had whatever advantage might have been gained from knowing the American edition of her text.

Miss Morley contributes a brief Introduction (pp. xi-xviii), in which the chief points of Young's critical tenets are clearly rehearsed. It is frankly admitted that the author was less of an innovator than he believed himself to be when he stated that "*Original Composition*" seemed to him to be a novel subject, having "seen nothing hitherto written on it." That the subject was one on which Young had long pondered is shown by passages from his own earlier writings, here arranged in three appendices: A. Extract from the Preface to the *Satires*, 1728; B. On *Lyric Poetry*, 1728; C. Preface to *Imperium Pelagi*: . . . (1730). Yet it remains true, it is asserted, "that no earlier work had dealt so boldly or in such detail with this aspect of the war between Ancients and Moderns." A consideration of Henry Felton's *Dissertation*, brought to recent attention by Dr. Crane (*Studies in Philology*, University of North Carolina, xv), would have been appropriate at this point. A 'Bibliography' is the remaining feature of Miss Morley's edition. This is "to illustrate the history and influence of the *Conjectures*." It is "not exhaustive," but sufficient to guide the student of the text to the pertinent "Eighteenth-Century Criticisms and References," and to "Modern References." But neither here nor in the Introduction is the student made aware of the marked difference between England and the Continent in the effect produced by the *Conjectures*. As before, the scholar will have most to do with Brandl and Steinke.

Miss Morley's edition will surely increase familiarity with the *Conjectures*, and the wider scrutiny of the letter must result in fresh interest in details of the argument, as well as in the construction of the composition as a literary whole. How the 'digression'

on Addison's death is to be argued into an organic connection with the discussion on originality in literary workmanship, imitation, the nature of genius, etc. is a question that will be more generally asked than ever before. What of the doctrine of propriety of details and of adherence to the tradition of the 'kinds'? What is the *genre* of the piece? Mr. Hack has essayed a correction of the attitude of the critical mind in dealing with questions of this import ("The Doctrine of Literary Forms," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, xxvii, 1916). By the *Ars Poetica* of Horace, it is argued, one is supported in reversing time-honored canons of criticism. In modern æsthetic philosophy one perceives a tendency, owing much to an Italian leader, to under-rate, if not to deny, the sustaining props and advantages that, thru the centuries, literary genius has acknowledged in the convention of tried and developed 'forms.' To resort to analogy, the types of architecture would seem to be denied because of the successful and pleasing tho inconsistent and compromising union and blendings of the features of the strict, historic 'styles.' Did Horace do otherwise than deliberately blend the style of the 'letter' with that of the formal 'treatise'? Surely not; and in doing so he knew that he was not subverting fixed traditions of his art, but merely availing himself of independent adaptations of them. Young's composition is, at all events, a conspicuous example of a deliberately 'mixed style,' which is appropriate enough in a 'letter.'

A beginning of a renewed discussion of the occasion, purpose, and form of the *Conjectures* is made by Professor H. W. O'Connor, in the present number of this periodical. It is urged that Young wrote the 'letter' to clear away mistaken inferences drawn from *The Complaint*, and to quiet his conscience by the performance of what he felt to be a duty to the memory of Addison,—a duty that he had come to see had not been executed with sufficient precision in *The Complaint*.

As a literary whole, organically wrought out, Young's letter, it has been assumed, defies all critical classification. The difficulty in the way of accepting it as an orderly treatise has been removed by simply regarding the passage on Addison's death as an inorganic, unrelated appendage; and this assumption has persuaded most critics to discontinue the old controversy. But assertion is not proof, nor does the dismissing of a difficulty solve it. Young was, after all, no inconsiderate craftsman, and the burden of proof rests on those who would contend that he was capable of submitting to the public a composition that cannot be understood to have a justifiable purpose and a recognizable design. Besides, it is to be remembered that Young was peculiarly frank in his manner of taking his readers into his confidence with respect to his literary purposes. Thus, for example, in his Prefaces to the *Complaint* much is disclosed of the operations of his mind to guide the reader into an intimate understanding of his work. Specifically, in the first brief

Preface, he declares that a method has been imposed on his mind by a real occasion, and that the poem consequently "differs from the common mode of poetry." This manner of explaining himself is not to be overlooked in the *Conjectures*, for it is there in clear terms and must be duly considered in an attempt to understand the character of the composition and the relation of its parts to the whole.

Miss Morley does not raise the question of the *genre* of the *Conjectures*; she simply regards the composition as a "lively little treatise on the critical problems which were engaging men's minds at the time it was written." The 'treatise' is, of course, marred by "blots": the "lugubrious beginning" and the closing 'digression' on Addison's death. But the beginning has a compensating value in putting us "in touch with the author" and in introducing us "to the prevailing gloom in the moralizings" of the time; this is also true of the account of Addison's death, which, it is acknowledged, "formed the chief inducement for writing" the treatise. In Miss Morley's judgment—and many agree with her—we are, therefore, to believe that the author has, in this instance, composed a treatise of acknowledged excellence, on which his 'chief inducement' for writing it, meaning the chief purpose to be served by it, has had no further effect than to mar the treatise by 'blots,' for which only a frail apology can be made.

Young is so explicit in declaring his purpose as to remove all grounds for the *a priori* assumption that he is to be held accountable primarily for an orderly treatise. His "chief inducement for writing at all," he declares, was "to deliver up to the public this sacred deposit, which by Providence was lodged in my hands; and I entered on the present undertaking partly as an introduction to that, which is more worthy to see the light; of which I gave an intimation in the beginning of my letter: For this is the *monumental marble* there mentioned, to which I promised to conduct you." Here is all required refutation of the charge of being disdainful of literary canons. The purpose in mind, it was decided, could be carried out in the free form of a letter to a friend, the form in which a sufficiently pertinent, tho treatise-like, 'introduction' to the special message would merely deepen the significance of the "chief inducement for writing at all." That the introductory matter—that which precedes the point at which Addison becomes the subject—has been expanded into the greater portion (about three-fourths) of the letter is warranted by the range of the critical principles that were to be set down for the desired approach to the character and death of Addison. The author's self-explanation can be construed to mean nothing else than that he was led to compose this letter by his sense of the definite obligation he felt to be due to the world. His words also admit of the inference that once committed to the introductory discussion of critical principles, he did not resist the pleasure of amplification; and the conjecture is warranted that in this amplification he was consciously laying a basis

for a subsequent study of Addison as "an *Original*." This purpose of a more complete study of Addison's literary character must certainly have become fixed in his mind as a logical and desirable sequel to the letter. It made the post-script inevitable; and this promise of a sequel argues the character, the organic interrelation of the parts, of that which it is to follow and complete. In the letter a brief application of the critical principles to several English authors is so handled as to pave the way to Addison; but here the main point of the communication—Addison's death—set a limit to concrete criticism of one of "the brightest of the moderns." Enough is set forth to justify the exclamatory question, "Who does not approach his character with great respect?" But the complete evaluation of his literary genius and originality was, in the judgment of the devout author, necessarily deferred.

J. W. B.

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J. H. Scholte, *Philipp von Zesen*, Overdruk uit het veertiende Jaarboek van de Vereeniging Amstelodamum. Amsterdam, 1916 (107 pp., 4to, with 3 portraits, 2 facsimiles, and 20 reproductions of title pages, etc.).

While Von Zesen has found a place in the history of German literature above all as the author of *Die Adriatische Rosemund* and the founder of the *Deutschgesinnte Genossenschaft* or *Rosengesellschaft*, he is best remembered in the Netherlands by his *Beschreibung der Stadt Amsterdam und derselben Begübniße* (Amsterdam, 1664). How much this work is appreciated in Holland to this very day may be gathered from the fact that in 1875 a street in Amsterdam was named the *Von-Zesen-straat*. Nor were the author's relations with the Netherlands confined to this work. To mention only a few data: he stayed in Holland, especially in Amsterdam, with few interruptions, from 1642 to 1673, and again from 1679 to 1683, so that nearly half of his life was spent there. At various occasions he ventured to write poems in Dutch. The scene of his first and most interesting novel, *Die Adriatische Rosemund*, is laid at the Amstel in one of the elegant suburbs of Amsterdam, and the novel was published in that city ('Amsteltam,' in Zesen's spelling) by L. Elzevir in 1645. Elzevir had previously—in 1644—published his *Liebes-beschreibung Lysanders und Kalisten* (a translation of d'Audigier's novel: *Histoire des Amours de Lysandre et de Caliste*), and agreed to become his publisher in 1645 not only for the *Adriatische Rosemund*, but also for his translation of Mlle de Scudéry's novel: *Ibrahim ou l'illustre Bassa*. and again, fifteen years later, of his *Leo Belgicus*. Other Dutch publishers with whom we find Zesen connected were Johannes Blaeu (*Coelum Astronomico-poeticum*, Amsterdam, 1662) and Joachim Noschen (*Beschreibung der Stadt Amsterdam*, *ibid.*, 1664). Let us add that on May 29, 1662, Zesen married in Amsterdam Maria Beckers, the daughter of Christian and Catharina Beckers, née

Rijntjes, and that on Oct. 20 of the same year, by resolution of the Mayor and the Governors of the City, the citizenship of Amsterdam was conferred upon him.

Such are a few of the facts set forth in Professor Scholte's treatise. Following up Zesen's traces in the Netherlands both in the literature of the 17th century—above all Zesen's own works—and in various archives, he has been able to furnish us for the first time with a detailed and reliable account of the years spent by Zesen in the Netherlands. He has succeeded, e. g., in finding in the archives of Amsterdam the entry of the banns (under May 13, 1672) of Zesen's marriage, the entry of the resolution, mentioned above, granting to him the citizenship of Amsterdam, and the text of the last will drawn up (on May 3, 1673) by Philip and Maria von Zesen. This, however, is not all. The revision of the biographical material for Zesen's varied career serves as a background for a careful portrayal of his literary activity in its various aspects. The estimate given by Prof. Scholte of Zesen's character and of his aims and achievements in literature avoids the extremes both of exaggerated praise and of disparaging criticism. His judgment will do much toward modifying and reconciling current opinions in this respect.

A special feature of Prof. Scholte's study deserves a word of acknowledgment, namely, the numerous illustrations with which the text is adorned. They are of various descriptions: portraits (mostly representing Zesen himself) of the seventeenth century; facsimiles of documents; copies of titlepages and frontispieces; reproductions of illustrations from Zesen's works; specimens of texts (especially songs with music). No better means could have been chosen for rendering the modern reader familiar with the conditions of life and literature in Zesen's own time.

Altogether we consider Professor Scholte's treatise a model piece of work and a most welcome contribution toward our knowledge of seventeenth-century literature.

K. H. C.

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Perhaps the finest tribute that can be paid to the Victorians is to mention them; praise is implicit in their names. At any rate, this is the impression one gets from reading the Hon. H. H. Asquith's admirable Romanes lecture of 1918 on *Some Aspects of the Victorian Age* (Oxford. The Clarendon Press). And this, too, with the exclusion under the conditions of the lectureship of all treatment of politics and religion. The opprobrium that our later age loves to fling at the mid-Victorians is put where it belongs, upon the outward life, which is in "almost paradoxical incongruity" with the inward. "On the whole," says Mr. Asquith, "the general attitude of mind was one of contentment, or at the lowest of acquiescence, which at times took the more challenging

note of an almost strident self-complacency." Yet what is about as remarkable, this complacent age recognized its great men, the poets and the novelists, the prophets and the philosophers, the historians and the scientists, so that "there is no instance (so far as we know) among the Victorians of the premature cutting off, by public neglect or critical vituperation, of some "inheritor of unfulfilled renown—such as was the actual case of Chatterton, or the legendary case of Keats." Browning and Meredith failed of immediate recognition because, as Mr. Asquith happily puts it, they became "by choice or caprice, experimentalists—one might almost say adventurers—in the art of expression. They teased their contemporaries." In surveying his wide field the lecturer avoids the futile path of comparative estimates, which he pokes fun at as a foible of Macaulay's, and the much trodden way of praising admitted greatness. So he devotes a paragraph to Kingsley that he be not utterly overshadowed by the towering heights of Dickens and Thackeray. He groups Carlyle, Ruskin, Arnold, and John Morley as the prophets who brought down on the head of self-sufficient mid-Victorianism "reproof, exhortation, and even denunciation." Carlyle "taught his contemporaries . . . with 'thorns of the wilderness and briers'"; Ruskin delivered "his stern and solemn message of warning and of judgment to come"; Arnold went into the pulpit because of his "intellectual irritation and impatience at the stupidity and sterility of contemporary life"; and Morley ruthlessly unveiled "some characteristic Victorian insincerities." In philosophy Mr. Asquith points out the sapping and slow undermining of the fashionable utilitarianism of the first twenty-five years of the reign by the followers of Herbert Spencer on the one hand, and of T. H. Green and Edward Caird on the other. The historians are disposed of with an allusion to the "rather unreal battle on the issue whether it is possible for a great historian to be both accurate and readable." The artists are dismissed with a brief blessing. The remaining pages of the lecture are given to the scientists and treat mainly of the long since quieted conflicts between science and religion, of the overthrowing of the Bishop of Oxford by Huxley, of Disraeli's disposing of Darwin and his school with the epigram, "Is man an Ape or an Angel? My Lord, I am on the side of the Angels." And this leads to the relation of ethics to evolution and thus to Huxley's Romanes lecture on that subject, in which he maintained that "ethical progress depends not on imitating the cosmic process but on defeating it." Or as Mr. Asquith finely puts it: "The last word in this as in some other vital matters is not with the philosophers, or even with the men of science, but with the poet, who has the gift of vision, and can teach us . . . 'What a piece of work is a man.'" And so the lecture ends as it began, with the poets.